

ART NEVER TASTED THIS GOOD!



TASTE of CHOCOLATE

BENEFITING THE BLOOMINGTON FINE ARTS COUNCIL

Sunday, March 15, 1 - 5 p.m.
Bloomington Center for the Arts
1800 W. Old Shakopee Road
THE TASTE OF CHOCOLATE is a midwest dessert competition and benefit for the Bloomington Fine Arts Council presented in partnership with the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by *Minnesota Monthly*, The Toro Company and HealthPartners. Enjoy savory chocolates by chefs and chocolatiers, entertainment, silent auction and a raffle drawing for fabulous prizes.

2009 HONORARY PASTRY CHEF
Rhonda Siebert of Truffles & Tortes

FEATURING CHOCOLATES BY

- ◆ Award Baking International
- ◆ Blue Water Grill, Hilton Airport
- ◆ Creative Confectionaire ◆ Godiva Chocolatier – Mall of America
- ◆ Kevin Lindee ◆ McCormick and Schmick Seafood Restaurant
- ◆ Muffuletta in the Park
- ◆ Mr. B. Chocolatier ◆ Obsession Chocolates ◆ Patisserie Margo
- ◆ restaurant Max at the Hotel Minneapolis ◆ River Chocolate Company ◆ Seasons at Dolce Oak Ridge ◆ Truffles & Tortes
- ◆ Woolley's Prime Steakhouse

Tickets are \$25 in advance; \$30 at the door. Early bird entrance is 12 - 1 p.m. with an additional \$10 donation per ticket. Purchase tickets at the Bloomington Center for the Arts, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, call 952-563-8575 or visit www.tasteofchocolate.org. For more information, call 952-563-8567.

SAFETY FIRST

STARS OF FOOD SAFETY

BLOOMINGTON FOOD COLLABORATIVE IN THE SPOTLIGHT

FOR MORE THAN A DECADE, Environmental Health has organized quarterly meetings to promote food safety through sharing information with chefs, food service and grocery store managers, school cooks and hotel managers. Through education and communication, the City is able to improve food safety for everyone. This is the goal of the Bloomington Food Collaborative.

Every year the Collaborative helps select winners of the Food Safety Awards, which are presented by Mayor Gene Winstead at the annual Diamond Service Awards. Food Safety Award candidates are selected by Bloomington Environmental Health inspectors based on the results of food safety inspections. Candidates are interviewed and scored by their industry peers.

Hosted by the Bloomington Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Diamond Service Awards event is considered the hospitality industry Academy Awards. Receiving a Food Safety Award is a source of pride and dedication to food safety. The event is the only one of its kind in Minnesota and one of just a few in the country.

The 13th Annual Diamond Service Awards will take place at the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel on **Thursday, March 19**. Seventeen employees will be honored for their outstanding commitment to customer service in the Bloomington hospitality industry. More than 300 nominations were reviewed. A Spirit of Hospitality Award will also be presented.

For more information on the Bloomington Food Collaborative, call Environmental Health Manager Lynn Moore at 952-563-8970. For more information on the Diamond Service Awards, contact Heather Proskey at 952-278-8514 or hproskey@bloomingtonmn.org.



Dino Contolatis, owner and manager of Gyropolis, accepted a Diamond Service Food Safety Award.

KEEP KIDS SAFE DURING SPRING BREAK

ENCOURAGING TEENS TO ABSTAIN FROM ALCOHOL

APRIl IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER, which means spring break for many Bloomington teens – a time to relax with friends and enjoy a respite from school. Unfortunately for some, it also means an opportunity to go to parties and use alcohol. Although teens may not realize it, those who imbibe in alcohol are increasing their likelihood of being involved in traffic crashes, violence and sexual assaults.

According to the 2007 Minnesota Student Survey, 35 percent of Bloomington ninth-grade students who reported using alcohol said they got it at parties.



If your teen wants to have a party, ensure it's alcohol free. Follow these tips:

- 1 Establish a maximum number and age limit for the guest list.
- 2 Tell parents about the party and explain there will be no alcohol.
- 3 Walk through the party area often; your presence is important.
- 4 If you suspect a teen guest is intoxicated, contact his or her parents/guardians immediately.
- 5 Have guests remain in the party location; do not allow teens to go back and forth to a parking lot or their car.

PLAY EVERY DAY
GUIDES OFFER FAMILIES ADVICE TO GET KIDS MOVING

THE US DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES recently recommended children engage in one hour or more of moderate or vigorous physical activity daily. "To meet these recommendations, physical activity must be easy to fit into busy lifestyles," Bloomington Public Health Nutritionist Joan Bulfer said.

To help families with young children, Bloomington Public Health has two physical activity resource guides available. "Play Every Day" helps families with young children find low-cost places to be active in our community. "Fit Activities for Kids" offers ideas for active play at home. Funds for the guides were provided by UCare and Action for Healthy Kids Minnesota.

Both guides are free and available for download on the City's website, www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Play Every Day.

SPRUCE UP YOUR HOME
HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS

THE BLOOMINGTON HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (HRA) is accepting applications through **March 27, 2009**, for its Home Improvement Deferred Loan Program.

Loans of up to \$35,000 are available to Bloomington homeowners. There are no monthly payments. Repayment occurs when the home is sold, transferred or conveyed. Interest is charged at an annual rate of 5 percent of the original loan principal for the first 10 years. No additional interest accrues after 10 years.

A lead risk assessment is required for all homes built before 1978.

The loans are to help maintain the condition of housing and neighborhoods. Applications are ranked and processed according to need.

Eligible repairs include replacing roofs, electrical, heating and plumbing systems, gutters, windows, doors, insulation, siding, soffits and fascia, exterior painting and foundation, sidewalk or step repairs.

Ineligible repairs include decorating, additions, finishing basements, remodeling and garage construction.

To apply for a Home Improvement Deferred Loan, you must be the owner-occupant of your home and have sufficient equity to cover the loan amount. *Income guidelines apply. See table below.*

INCOME GUIDELINES

Persons in household*	Maximum gross income**
1	\$43,050
2	\$49,200
3	\$55,350
4	\$61,500
5	\$66,400
6	\$71,350
7	\$76,250
8 or more	\$81,200

* Includes all residents of household, related and unrelated, including renters.

** Subject to change.



Loan applications will be accepted at the HRA office at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, until Friday, March 27, 2009. For more information or to receive an application, call 952-563-8937.